



Let's Tell

Your Story

Information Forum Publication

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Published by the
Utah State Library Division
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Utah State Library Division**

Let's Tell Your Story

OR

How To Sell Your Library Using Statistics

**Published by the
Utah State Library Division
Department of Community and Economic Development**

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The Introduction and the section on "Telling Your Story Using The Annual Report", in this publication, rely heavily on the Texas guide. We would like to acknowledge and thank the Library Development Division of the Texas State Library and, especially, Mark Smith for their fine work and for sharing that work with all the states. We would also like to thank NCES and NCLIS for funding the project and making it available to others.

Thanks and appreciation also go to Keith Lance, Library Research Service, Colorado State Library, for all of his innovative ideas for using statistics. With his permission, many of those ideas are illustrated in this publication.

The intention of this manual is to help people working in and with local public libraries to use statistics to further the cause of their own library.





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Introduction

Imagine the following conversation between two head librarians. They are standing at the soft drink machine at a continuing education workshop. Nancy, the librarian at the Foot of the Mountain Public Library, is chatting with John from the Deep Canyon City Library.

John: Hi there, Nancy. How are things over in Foot of the Mountain?

Nancy: Fine, John. Busy, though. You know we are having a groundbreaking on our new building next month.

John: (enviously) Yes, congratulations.

Nancy: And we just got a big boost in our book budget to buy materials for the new building and to put in a new automation system.

John: Wow! Well, it must be nice to work in such a rich town.

Nancy: Actually, the average income in our town is about the same as yours.

John: (Taken aback) But, how do you know that?

Nancy: I use statistics a lot.

John: Statistics? You've got to be kidding. Only big libraries use statistics.

Nancy: I use them and we're not a big library. My service area is actually smaller than yours.

John: Well, I don't think I could ever use them. They're such a bother.

Nancy: Then how do you know how you compare with other libraries? What do you use to brag about your library to the board or to the city council? How do you know when an activity is successful or not? I'll give you an example. This year was the first time we had story hours as part of the summer reading program. Circulation for all types of books was 20% higher than last year! When I told my board that, they agreed to a big increase in my program budget to cover new activities next year.

John: You do all that just with statistics?

Nancy: Sure, but that's not all. I use them to compare our budget with other libraries around the state. I even use them to argue for more money for salaries, including my own.

John: But, where do all these statistics come from?

Nancy: Mainly I just use the ones that we collect for the annual report. You do an annual report, don't you?

John: Oh, yeah, but I don't spend too much time on it. After all, it's just a technicality the State Library requires. I mostly just estimate the numbers I put on the form.

Nancy: Well, for heaven's sake, John, don't do that.

John: Why not? After all, nobody cares much about what us little libraries do.

Nancy: I care, John. See, I compare my library to other libraries of the same size across the state, including yours. When I was discussing salaries with my board last fall, I argued that you pay your pages more than we do, so I was able to get them an increase. I need accurate figures in order to build a strong case and so that I know I'm getting a true picture.

John: Really? We pay our pages more? Okay, I'm a believer, but do you think I could do what you do with statistics? Frankly, our funding situation is so bleak, I'd be willing to try anything.

Nancy: Sure, I'd be glad to talk to you more about it. We do charts and graphs but you don't have to get that fancy. Just to know what the figures are is sometimes good enough.

John: Great. Now I'm getting excited.

Nancy: But the first thing you need to do is to start collecting reliable statistics. That will help you and me both out. Is it a deal?

John: It's a deal. Say, I'm glad we talked. And good luck on your ground-breaking!

John is excited about library statistics. He has learned what Nancy already knew: statistics can be valuable to his program. Nancy understands that statistics can be an effective way to know if you're doing a good job and to tell others what you are doing.

There are a few things to note when using statistics:

1. When you are comparing your library to previous years or to other libraries, **were the same things counted and in the same way?** In other words, are you comparing mangos and mangos, or mangos and kumquats?

This is the reason that the State Data Coordinators work through the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data to refine and document precise definitions for the data we collect in each state. If you collect data not asked for on the annual report form, you should take the same care in defining what you are collecting.

2. When you are telling your story, try to **tell the whole story, and don't skew the statistics or graphs to make things look better**, or worse, than they are. Someone will catch you at it, and there goes your credibility. *How To Lie With Statistics* (see the bibliography in Appendix A) gives a good overview of this problem.
3. Make sure you **note the source of your statistics**, especially when you are comparing yourself to some other entity. When you look at the graphic examples in a later section of this publication, you will see that the source of the data is included in some as an example.
4. When comparing yourself to other libraries, **think carefully about who your peers are**. This group may vary, depending on what you want to find out and to whom you are presenting the statistics. A city council or county commission may have their own ideas of

which cities/counties are comparable. Use those jurisdictions, even if circumstances are vastly different for the libraries. Then be ready to explain the problem.

Most libraries compare themselves to others serving the same general population. This is a good approach for a general picture. But, if you are looking at workload, why not compare yourself to libraries with the same circulation, and then look at their staff, hours open, expenditures, and size of collection.

5. **When doing comparisons, ratios give a truer picture.** A large library probably has a larger circulation than a smaller library. However, when you look at their circulation per capita figures, the libraries may be very similar. Therefore, you should look at per capita figures, turnover rates, and expenditures per transaction to get a better comparison.

Libraries with computers and graphic programs can use statistics to create charts and graphs to dramatically illustrate various aspects of library growth, change, and usage. Many library directors find the use of such visual demonstrations of data to be an effective way of presenting library facts to library boards, local governing bodies, library staff, and the public.

Sample graphic presentations of statistics are discussed and illustrated later in "Telling Your Story Using Graphics...". *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (see bibliography) is also a helpful source for creating and interpreting graphs.

We hope you already use library statistics in these and other ways. If you do, this manual may help you find ways to use them more effectively. If you do not, this manual will be an introduction to the nature and uses of statistics.



Telling Your Story Using The Annual Report

In the introduction to this manual, we described how statistics can be an important management tool in your library. Unfortunately, many libraries do not make full use of statistics as a tool to justify their programs, measure their effectiveness or pursue increased funding. So, let's look at ways you can use the statistics you already collect in your library.

All public librarians in the state turn in an annual statistical report (commonly referred to as "Your Annual Report") to the State Library Division. The State Library staff, in turn, audits and compiles those reports into the annually published *Utah Public Library Service* (also known as "The State Annual Report"). A compilation of the totals from all the states, territories and District of Columbia is published each year by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, under the title *Public Libraries in the United States*.

If you are looking at only your library over time, you might well use *Your Annual Report* as it has more detailed statistics. If you are comparing your library to others in the state, you would use *The State Annual Report*. If you are looking out of state, you can call the State Library for help in obtaining the necessary statistics.



Using The Stats to Justify Your Programs

Librarians can use statistical data on the local level as a way to justify adding new programs, keeping existing programs, or eliminating programs which are no longer effective.

Example

Nancy, Director of the Foot of the Mountain Public Library, persuaded the library board to allow her to offer, for the first time, a story hour as part of the summer reading program. The board stipulated, however, that at the end of the program, she be able to demonstrate that the story hours had been effective enough to justify their continuation next year. Nancy kept program attendance figures, library attendance figures, and circulation figures for the summer. By comparing them to previous years, she was able to demonstrate that the story hours had caused an increase in program attendance, as well as a dramatic increase in circulation even among adult materials. Not only did the program justify itself, but she could show the full impact of the program on library use.

The process presumes that good statistics are kept year to year. You cannot show that the new story hours increased circulation if you don't have the circulation from previous years. A graph would be helpful to show that the circulation jumped with the summer story hours, rather than just kept on a steady increase which had occurred over the past several years. (See page 23.)



Using The Stats to Measure Effectiveness

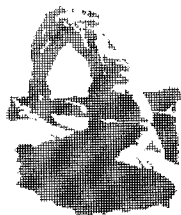
Another local use of library statistics is measuring overall program effectiveness. Output statistics, when shown as a factor of population, are excellent measures of the effectiveness of library programs. Such figures might be circulation per capita, reference transactions per capita, library visits per capita, and so forth.

Instructions for computing output statistics can be found in *The State Annual Report* and in *Output Measures for Public Libraries* (see bibliography in Appendix A).

Example

Two years ago, the Rushing River Public Library implemented a collection development policy for the first time. The policy included a weeding schedule, acquisitions guidelines, a gift books policy and other features. Some of the staff had misgivings about turning down donations and weeding books out of the collection. The circulation rate, however, increased from 6.1 to 7.2 items per capita, more than a 15% increase in one year with no change in the size of the service area or any other major change in library policy or conditions. The staff and administration of the library could clearly evaluate the effectiveness of the new collection development policy.

Again, good statistics over the years are necessary for this type of comparison. However, be careful in making a big production over a small percentage change. Circulation could have increased a small amount simply because you were open a couple more days that year because of the way holidays and weekends fell.



Using Comparisons to Lobby for Increases

The State Annual Report contains much of the data reported by Utah public libraries, either by individual library or by population range. Many libraries find this data useful in creating comparisons to their own libraries in order to lobby for increased funding.

Example

Tom, Director of the Hole in the Wall Memorial Library, wants to persuade his town to increase the overall budget for the library. He needs to prove his argument that the \$8,000 he gets to run his library is far below average. From the current *Utah Public Library Service*, Tom finds comparison data for other libraries serving similar populations across the state. Tom is able to demonstrate to the town council of Hole in the Wall that the library falls well below the average for similar libraries in overall expenditures, expenditures per capita and salaries, while they are above average in circulation per capita.



Telling Your Story Using Statistics Not in The Annual Report

The State Library Division requests only those statistics needed for national data collection and statistics which can aid the State Library in monitoring statewide library services and trends. There are other statistics which can help you in evaluating your local situation. They fall into two categories: 1) statistics you collect in-house, and 2) statistics you get from other sources.



Other Helpful Statistics You Can Collect

Most of you look at only those statistics which the State Library requires you to include in *Your Annual Report*. Let's take a moment to discuss briefly other statistics that you could easily collect and which could provide you with valuable information about your library.

Registered Borrowers.

No questions about the number of registered borrowers using your library appear on the annual report. Nevertheless, the number of current registrations is an important indicator of the level of use of your library. If you have an automated system, you can easily determine the number of active users. In a non-automated library, this information will have to be derived from sampling the registration files in much the same way that the shelflist is sampled to derive the size of the collection. The number of current registrations is most useful as an indicator of use when expressed as a percentage of the total population served. But your files must be current. Someone who registered ten years ago and hasn't been back since should not be in the registration file. A

good rule of thumb is: A patron's registration should be set up to expire every two to three years, and expired registrations should be removed from the files every six months, at minimum.

In-house use of materials.

More and more, a major use of library materials occurs right in the library itself (magazines, reference materials, CD-ROM databases, etc.). However, because the material used does not get counted in the daily circulation figures, it is not reflected in other statistics, such as circulation per capita or turnover of the collection. Such use can have a great impact on staff time, as well as the facility itself. In-house use of library materials can be a major library function and, as such should be reflected in the statistics you use to "Tell Your Story." The easiest way to count this use is to conduct a "typical week" survey. *Output Measures*, mentioned above, has good guidelines for conducting this type of survey. Your State Library consultant can also be of assistance.

Materials availability.

Many libraries keep track of how well the library collection serves the needs of library users. Materials availability refers to the rate at which patrons find items owned by the library on the library's shelves. This is usually a simple calculation comparing the number of items for which a patron searched to the number found on the shelf. The problem is that the only way to get this information is to ask the patron, which usually requires some form of survey.

Fill rates.

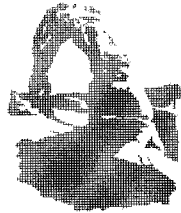
These refer to the rate at which the library collection has particular items for which patrons are searching (i.e., Does the library own the item the patron wants?). Fill rates can be done for title, author or subject. Like materials availability, fill rate information should be derived from patron surveys.

Document delivery.

This measure refers to how quickly requested materials are supplied to the patron. This is an easily collected statistic and will indicate how responsive your library is to the needs of your patrons. The information can be collected by tracking all requests for a period of time, perhaps once or twice a year. The

tracking can then be repeated at the same time in successive years to monitor progress.

These and other statistical measures of library service are fully discussed in *Output Measures*, which also contains several sample forms to use in collecting many of the library statistics we have been discussing in this manual.



Other Pertinent Information You Might Use

There are many other sources for statistics which you may find helpful. The U.S. Bureau of the Census publications can provide you with information on the number of school-aged children in your area, or the number of elderly, minorities, illiterates, etc. These figures are effective in justifying a change in current programs, the addition of new programs, or just change in the emphasis of the library because of population shifts.

Demographic profiles, salary surveys, book market information, state and federal government documents are all rich sources of information.

Several sources are listed in the bibliography of this publication, and the State Library staff is always ready to help you find the information you need.



Telling the State and National Story Using Public Library Stats

How the Stats Are Used Statewide

Once you have filed your annual report, the State begins to use your data to put together a picture of the status of Utah public libraries.

The State Library enters the data into a computerized database from which the annual *Utah Public Library Service* is generated and distributed to every public librarian and trustee in the state. This report gives local libraries the data needed to compare themselves to other public libraries.

Staff at the State Library use the data throughout the year for a variety of functions. Sometimes individual libraries request detailed statistical information. In answering these requests, the staff uses the statistics database to generate the information requested. The State Library also examines the data in the course of its ongoing assessment of the status of local public libraries service statewide.

The State Library uses the data in another way. In much the same way a local library uses the data as a planning tool, so does the State in its long-range planning for statewide library development. By looking at the status of Utah in comparison to other states and to national averages, State Library staff, working with librarians from across the state, can make more informed decisions about what directions statewide library development should take.



How the Stats Are Used Nationwide

After all the data has been entered into a database, the State Library sends a subset of the data, in electronic format, to the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S.

Department of Education. NCES receives this data from all the states, territories and District of Columbia.

NCES then merges the data and creates an annual report called *Public Libraries in the United States*. This publication reports totals for each state and territory, not information for each library. An electronic database of all 8,000+ public libraries in the U.S. can also be provided. The government document and database are available to anyone interested in public library issues and will be used by library researchers and others in need of detailed information about public libraries across the country.



Telling Your Story Using Graphs, "Snapshots" And Annual Summaries

Let's Look at Graphs

Graphs (or charts) are a good comparison tool, whether you are comparing your library to others, or whether you are comparing your library to itself over time.

In the first instance you would use a bar chart, as each library is a separate entity and not a point on a continuum. To look at your library over time (eg. circulation for the last ten years) try both a bar graph and a line graph. Sometimes one gives a clearer picture than the other.

Pie charts are used when you are looking at parts of a whole (such as, the breakdown of expenditures into personnel, collection development, miscellaneous operating, and capital outlay). This is not a good chart to use when comparing libraries or comparing years.

The Utah State Library Division is ready to help you develop a set of graphs to use in "telling your story" if you do not have the software to create them yourself. You will find some examples further on in this section. Note that in some cases the raw data (such as, total circulation for the year) is shown on one side of the graph and the per capita figure is on the other. The important figures are the per capita ones.

If you should request the State Library to develop a set of charts for you, there are several things you should keep in mind.

1. Know what you want. First, if you want to compare yourself to other libraries, know how you want to define your library peer group (geographically, by population, by expenditures, by circulation, etc.). You may not know the names of the libraries in the group, but you should be able to define the group (or groups) you want to use. That group may also include libraries outside of Utah. Second, you should have an idea of the data that you want compared library to library (circulation, staff, hours, etc.), and also any "over time" statistics you would like charted for your own library.

2. Timing. The Coordinator of Library Management Information at the State Library has limited hours assigned for this service, and gathering the information and creating the charts takes time, especially if some of the data comes from outside the state. Then there is the delivery time. If you do not have access to a laser-quality fax machine, you should have the graphs mailed to you. All in all, give the State Library time enough to do a good job for you. A rush job will look precisely like that, and will impact your message.
3. In some ways this next suggestion is also a “timing” issue. Give yourself enough time to look over the graphs. You need to know what they are showing, what the implications are, and how the different charts tie together. Someone is bound to ask you questions. See the “Core Performance Measures” section of *The State Annual Report* for factors which may affect each measure.

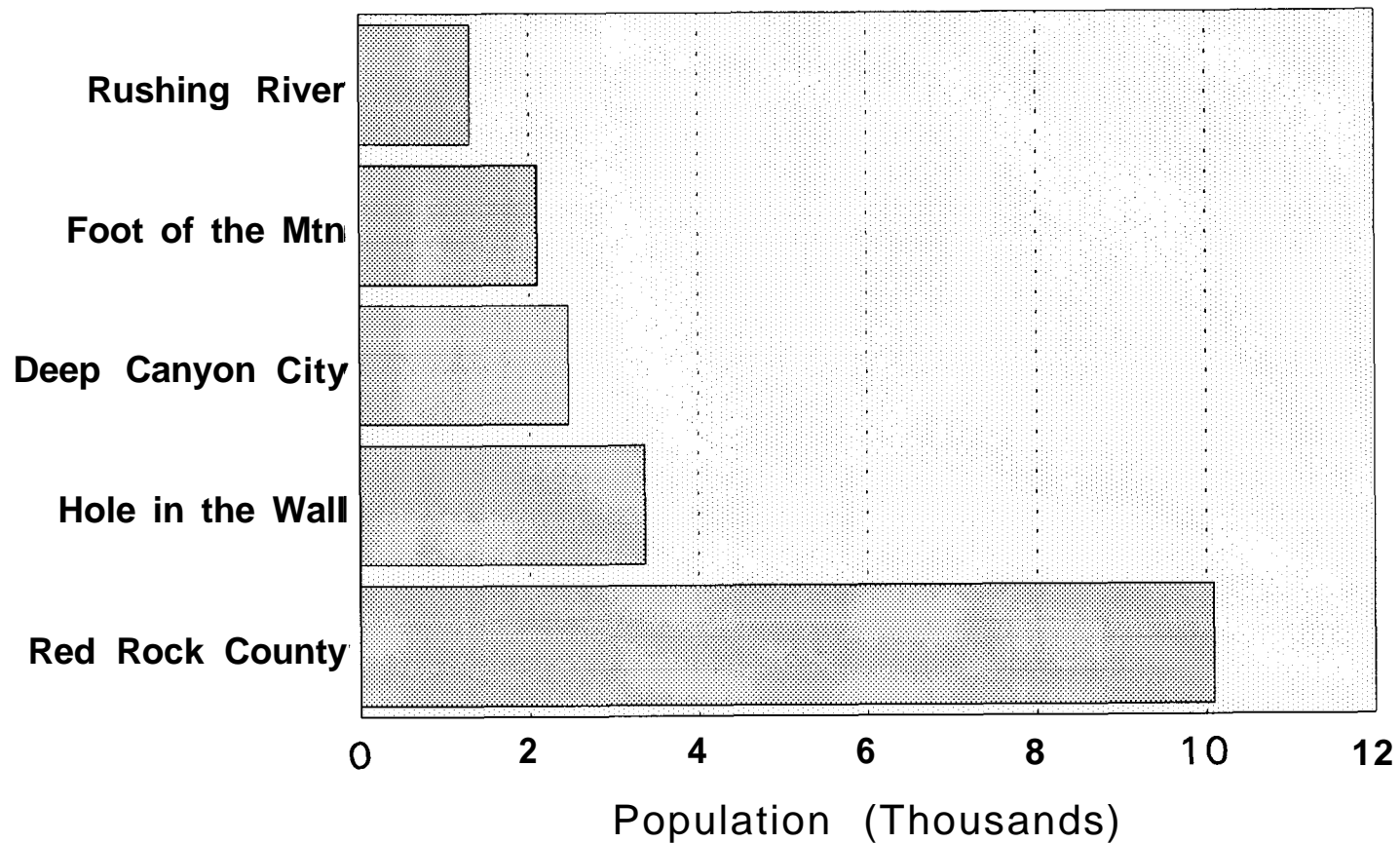
Remember, sometimes “A picture is worth a thousand words.” Sometimes graphs can “tell your story” more clearly than you can explain it, but know what your graphs are telling before you use them.

Example

Hole in the Wall Memorial Library is going to their City Council to give a report on the library and to defend their budget request. Knowing that the Council members like to compare their town to others in the same region, the librarian requested a set of graphs for all the libraries in the Color Country Region of the state. Pages 16-22 illustrate a few of the charts which were produced, with a short analysis of what each chart shows. Comments in the analyses also indicate other statistics and factors which should be considered to get a full picture.

Color Country Region Libraries

Population



Data from Utah Fictitious Library Service 1993

Color Country Region Libraries Population

There are two counties in the Color Country Region. The first is the Red Rock County, which has a county-wide library system with a headquarters and two branches. The second is Canyon County, which has four city libraries, but no county library. Each city library is a separate jurisdiction. All the libraries in the region actively cooperate with each other. The first chart (page 16) is a simple population chart. As would be expected, the Red Rock County Library has a much bigger service population.

Color Country Region Libraries Circulation and Circulation Per Capita

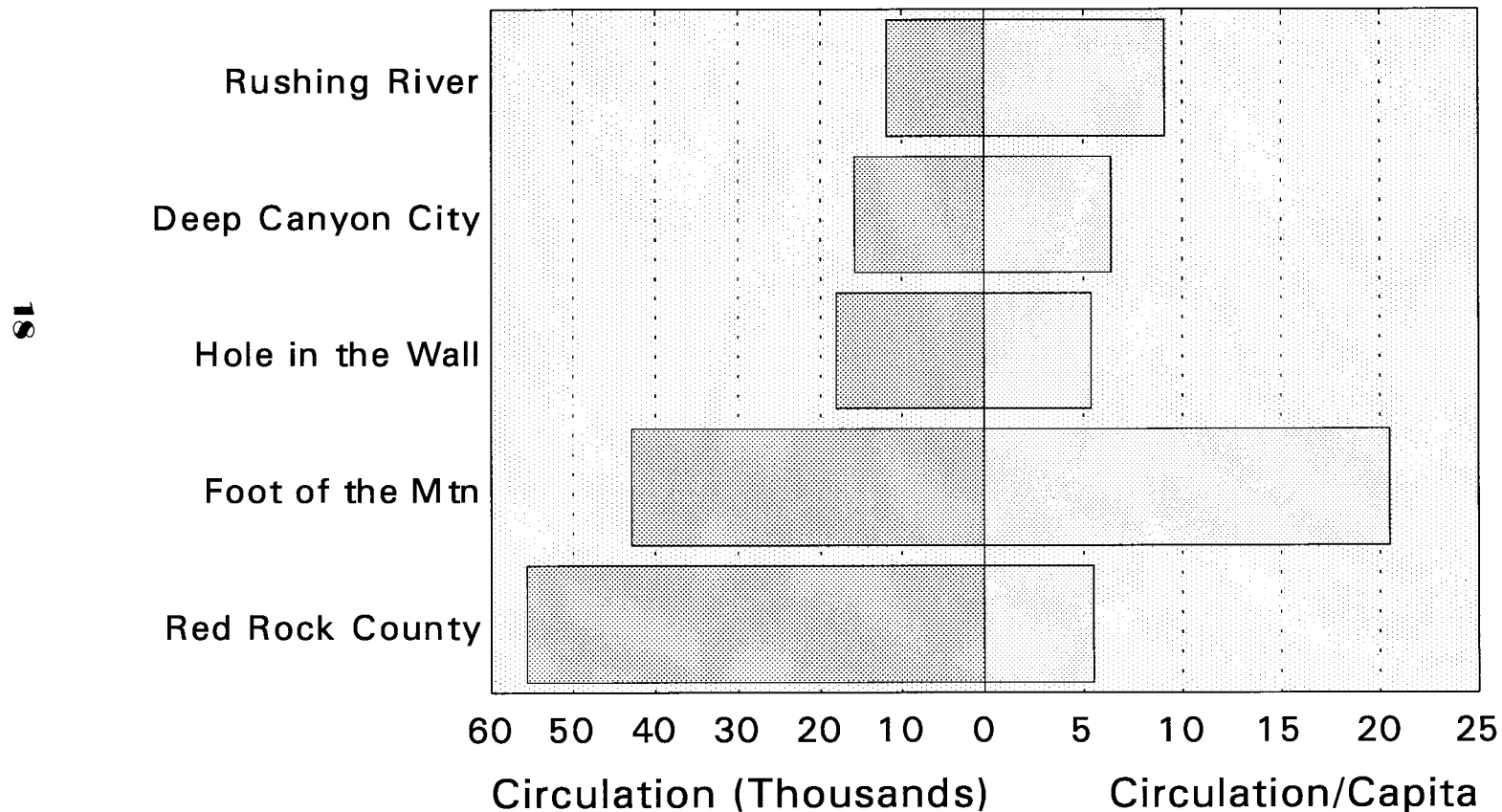
The second chart (page 18) is a circulation comparison. The left side is total circulation and, as would be expected, the county library is the largest. However, when you look at the right side of the chart, you see that Foot of the Mountain has a much higher circulation per capita than the other libraries, and Red Rock County is one of the lowest.

One factor governing this is the roles of the libraries. As we know from the beginning dialogue, Foot of the Mountain has been pushing children's programming, with the resulting increase in circulation. (See the graph on page 23.) Red Rock County, on the other hand, does a lot of reference/research for all of the libraries in the region. Therefore, much of the material at the headquarters is not available for check out. This can lower their circulation figures.

Hole in the Wall Memorial Library (the one requesting the graphs) has the lowest circulation per capita and should look at other measures, such as attendance, size of the collection, and turnover rate. Another factor may be the age of the collection. If the materials budget has been very low for several years, the collection will be old, and people may not find the current information they need. A thorough weeding and stress on collection development may turn this around.

Color Country Region Libraries

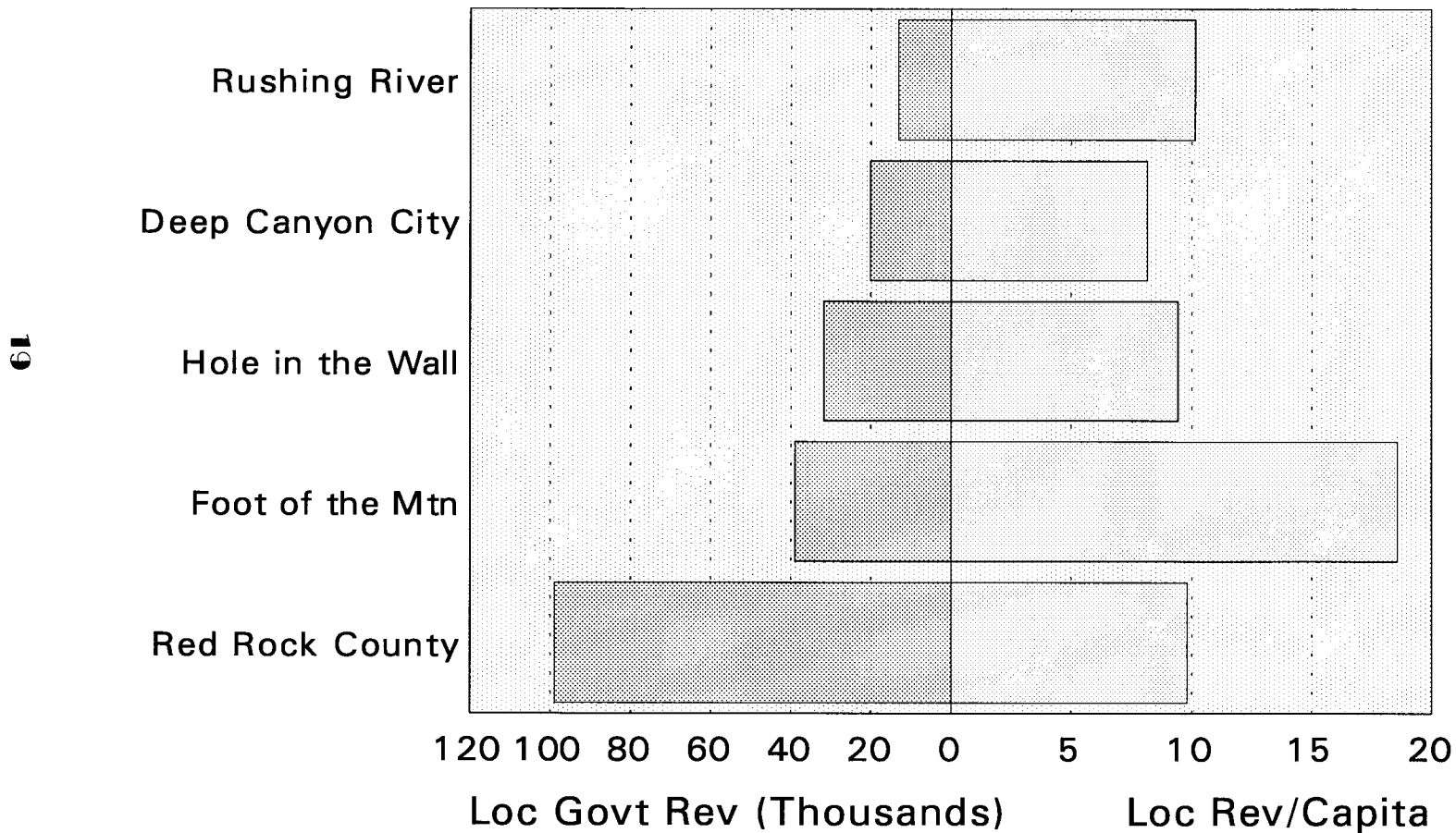
Circulation and Circulation Per Capita



Data from Utah Fictitious Library Service 1993

Color Country Region Libraries

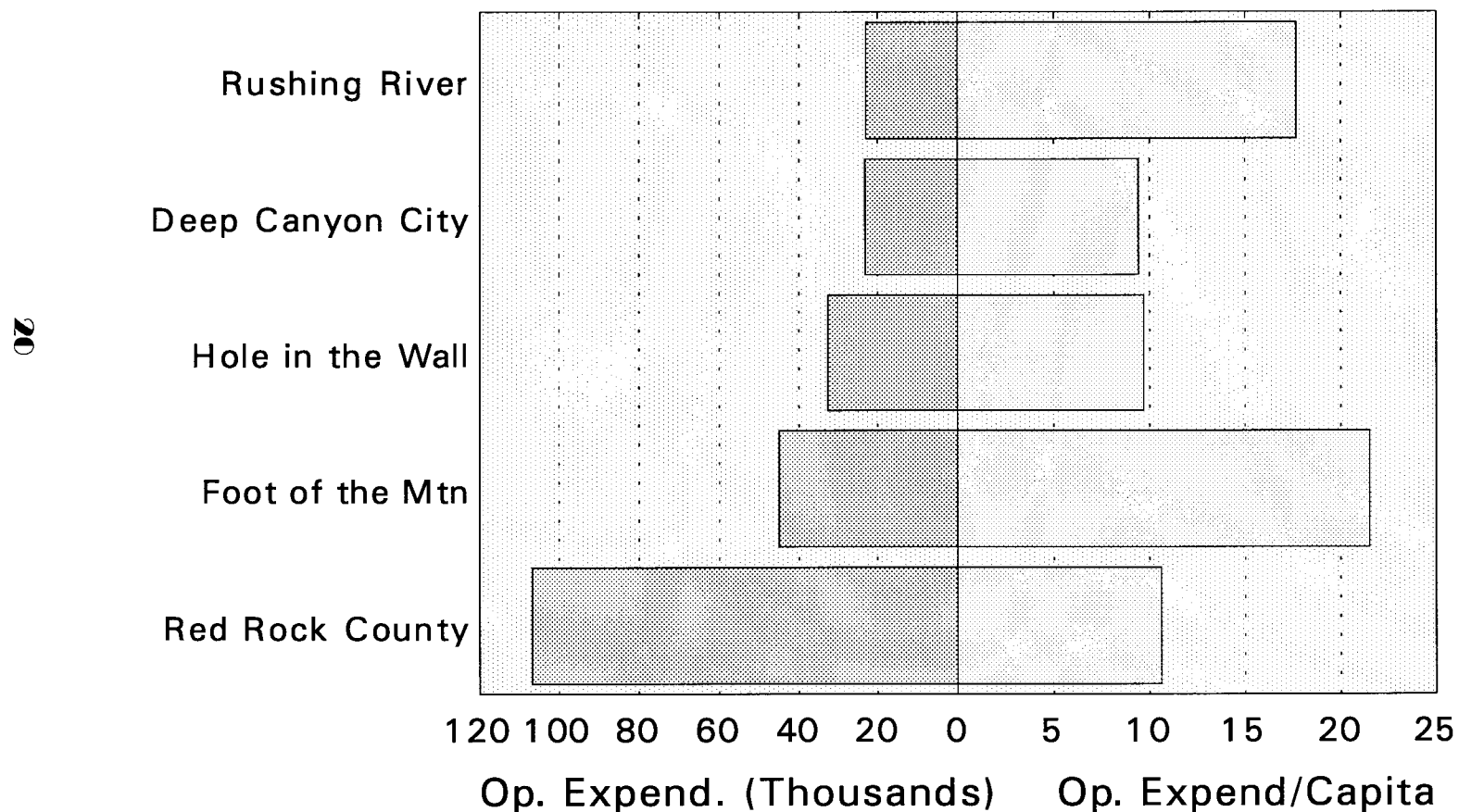
Local Government Revenue and Local Govt Revenue Per Capita



Data from Utah Fictitious Library Service 1993

Color Country Region Libraries

Operating Expenditures and Expenditures Per Capita



Data from Utah Fictitious Library Service 1993

Color Country Region Libraries

The next two charts (pages 19-20) show the amount of local government revenue going to the libraries and then the total operating expenditures of the libraries. Money for these expenditures may come from local taxes, other local sources (such as fines, fees, or gifts), or grants from state government and federal government or private foundations. Again, the per capita side of the graphs shows the success of the Foot of the Mountain librarian in increasing her budget. Hole in the Wall is one of the lower libraries on each chart, but is fairly close to the other libraries. A factor which does not show on these charts is the relative wealth of the jurisdictions. Assuming that the majority of the tax money comes from property tax, higher assessed valuations will give that jurisdiction a greater potential for more money.

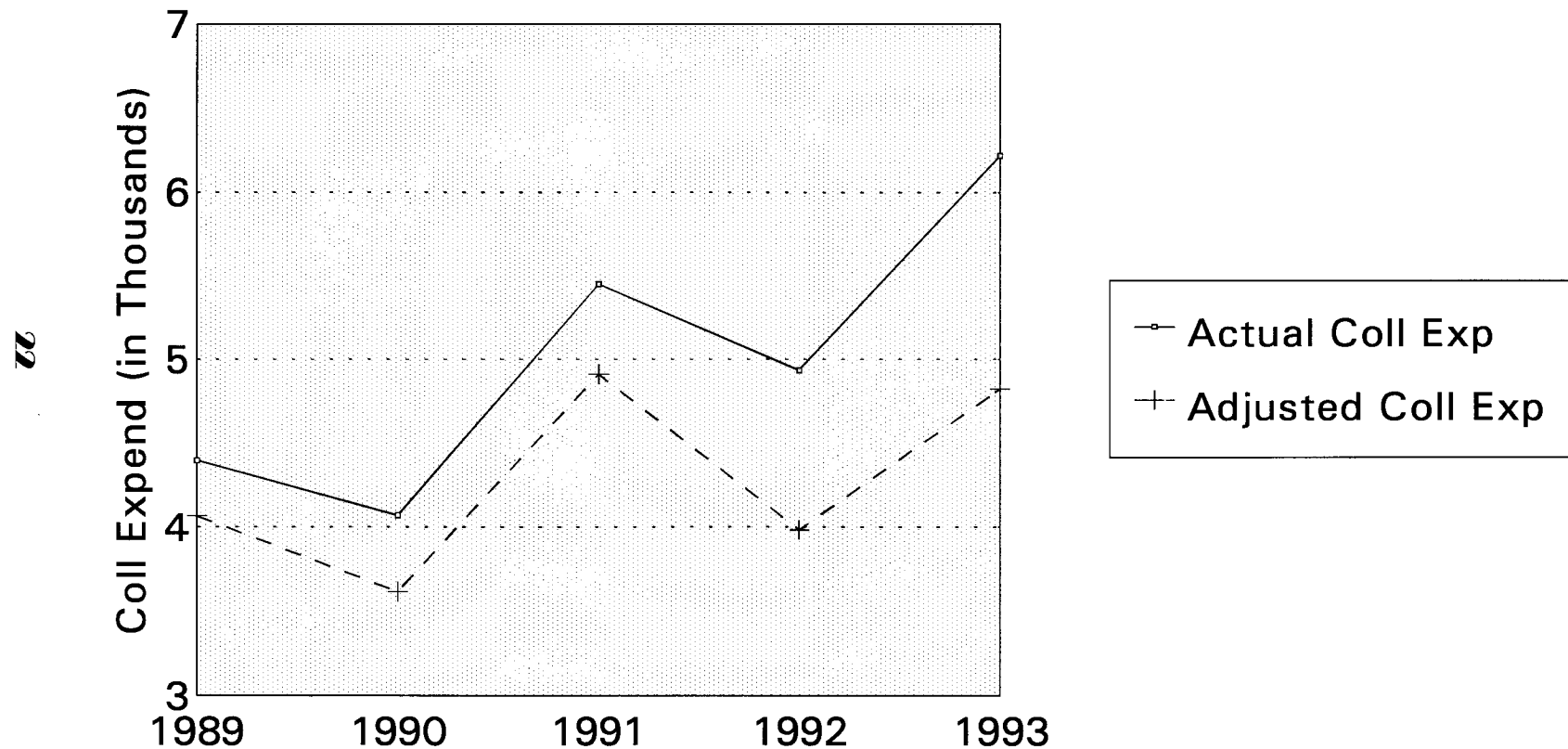
Color Country Region Libraries

The last three charts are "over-time" comparisons. The first (page 22) is still for the Hole in the Wall Memorial Library. It shows the impact of inflation on their materials budget. When the materials budget is adjusted for the growth in the price of books over the last five years, you can see that the library is losing ground in its purchasing power. This, of course, affects the amount of new material going into the library.

The second and third "over-time" chart (page 23) show the jump in circulation for the Foot of the Mountain Public Library after the successful summer reading program described in the introduction of this publication. One chart is a line and the other a bar to illustrate how one may be more effective than the other.

Hole in the Wall Memorial Library

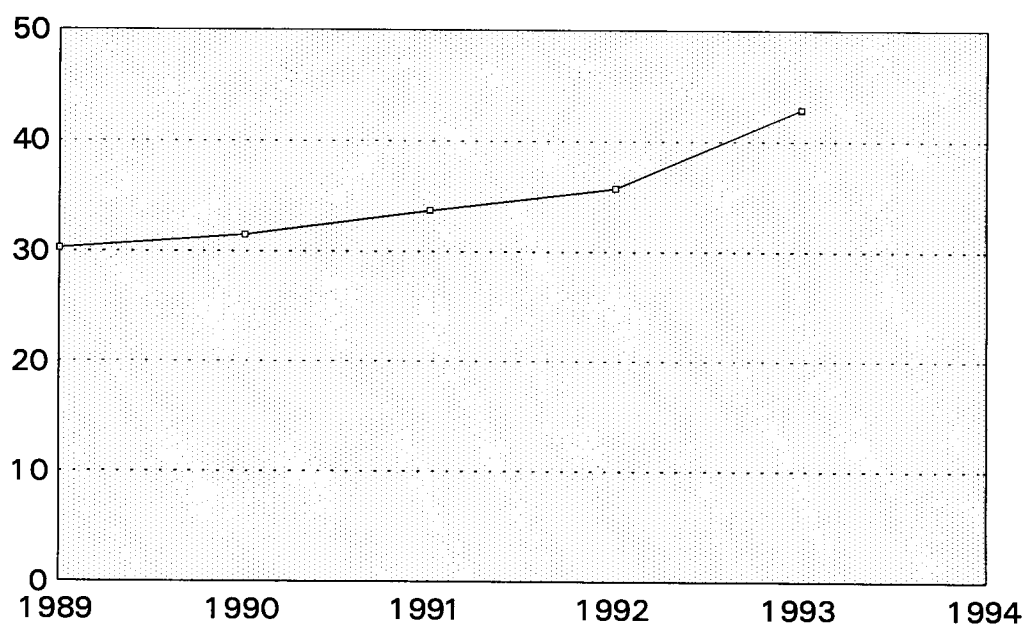
Impact of Inflation on Collection Expenditures



Actual Collection Expenditures are taken from the Utah Fictitious Library Service 1989-1993.
Adjusted Coll.Expend. are computed based on book prices published in Publisher's Weekly
using 1988 as the base.

Foot of the Mountain Public Library

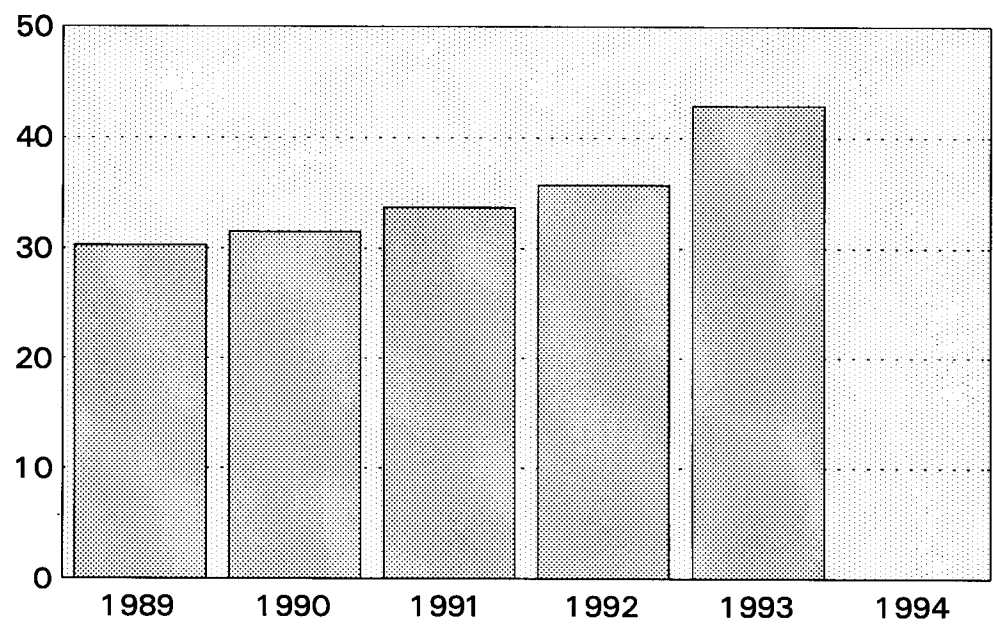
Circulation of Materials



Data from Utah Fictitious Library Service 1989-1993.

Foot of the Mountain Public Library

Circulation of Materials



Data from Utah Fictitious Library Service 1989-1993.

Let's Look at "Snapshots"

Snapshots are snippets of information, newspaper fillers, and blurbs. Use them as an accent to make a point, or as a fun "bite" of information, which also educates. They are excellent on bookmarks. They use statistics to show relationships which may be more meaningful to your audience than straight library statistics. Add an appropriate graphic image whenever possible, but don't overdo it.

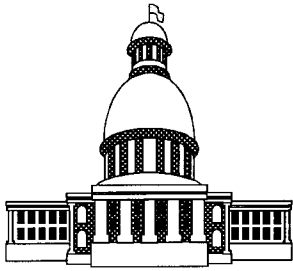
When you are making a presentation to a group of politicians, at any level, remember that they are more concerned with their constituents than they are with how many books you have. Many of the following examples illustrate that point as they talk about the number of people who used the library or the number of people who have a library card, etc.

Although many of the examples are from a statewide or nationwide perspective, the same concept can work at a local level. Use your imagination, **BUT** use statistics which are verifiable.

NOTE: Most, if not all, of these snapshots originated with Keith Lance, Colorado State Library. They are reproduced here with his permission.

Examples

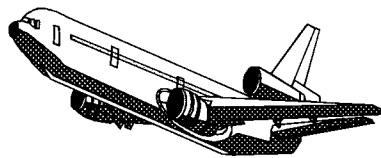
How do you compare to other activities in your area? (See page 25.) Use your comparisons to point out the benefits of the library when talking to your city or county officials. Put them on book marks or flyers to be distributed at the circulation desk. Also send copies to the local newspaper or radio station for PSA and filler announcements.



As many Coloradans are registered to use public libraries as are registered to vote.

Visits to Colorado libraries outnumber ski lift ticket sales six to one annually.

Circulation of books & other materials by Colorado libraries outnumbers passenger traffic out of Stapleton Airport two to one annually.



Participants in cultural & educational programs sponsored by Colorado's public libraries each year would fill Mile High Stadium seven times & McNichols Arena 29 times.

Examples

Let's look at money. Is the library a "good buy" Do some calling around and some figuring to fit the following examples to your local situation.

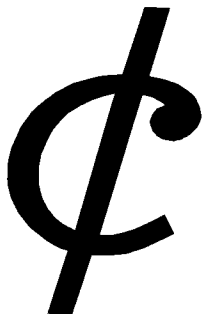
ARE YOU GETTING YOUR MONEY'S WORTH?

The .38 cent sales tax increase will cost
the average Boulder citizen approximately
\$17.00 per year.

For \$17.00 you can buy:

- 1/3 of a filled pothole
- OR
- 3/4 of a new hardback book
- OR
- 3/4 of a ticket to the CU--Nebraska football game
- OR
- 1 tankful of gasoline
- OR
- 1 extra large pizza with the works
- OR
- 2 1/4 months of the DAILY CAMERA
- OR
- 3 movie tickets with popcorn and a soft drink
- OR
- 3 parking tickets
- OR
- 3 aerobics classes
- OR

Unlimited use of an improved and expanded Public Library, open full time, including free attendance at Library concerts and films.



A Dollar's Worth
of Value
For Every Penny

In 1988, the typical Coloradan paid

\$9.97

for public library service. In exchange for that small contribution, the typical resident:

borrowed six circulating books, such as	
James Michener's ALASKA	\$22.95
Robert Fulghum's ALL I NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN	16.95
Stephen Hawking's A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME	18.95
David Macauley's THE WAY THINGS WORK	24.95
The DICTIONARY OF CULTURAL LITERACY	19.95
Lee Iacocca's TALKING STRAIGHT	21.95

used two items in the library, such as:	
The WALL STREET JOURNAL	\$101/yr
The ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ASSOCIATIONS	230

received assistance in finding information using reference material, such as:	
DUN'S BUSINESS RANKINGS	\$395
STANDARD & POOR'S BOND GUIDE	145

If an individual had purchased
only these materials, the cost
would have been about

\$997.00.



Library
Tax Liberation
Day

May 6 was Tax Liberation Day. U.S. Taxpayers spent January 1 to May 5 earning what we will pay in federal taxes for the year. So, our paychecks are our own for the rest of the year.

Let's apply this idea to local library funding in Colorado.

Figures on local library funding and adjusted gross income for the state indicate that Coloradans spend just three hours -- let's say 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on January 1 -- earning the taxes that will support public libraries in the state for the entire year.

Perhaps we should schedule an 11:00 brunch for next January 1 to celebrant Library Tax Liberation Day!

Examples

It is amazing how many people visit libraries in the course of the year and appalling how little is spent on libraries. Here are some snippets at the national level which present an interesting picture.

During 1993 the Grand Canyon has 4.6 million visitors. During 1992 the nation's public libraries has 773.3 million visits by users. So, one year's worth of visits to the Grand Canyon equals two days' worth of visits to U.S. public libraries.

In 1992 the average monthly cost of subscribing to a cellular telephone service was \$68.60. The same year, annual per capita expenditures on public library were \$18.73 -- or \$1.56 per month. The daily cost of cellular telephone service was equivalent to more than six weeks of public library service.

According to a recent report, Federal Express delivered 1.7 million packages per day in 1993. Based on recent National Center for Education Statistics reports, it may be estimated that U.S. public libraries circulated 4.4 million books and other materials per day in 1993. That is more than two and a half times the daily number of Federal Express deliveries.

During 1992 \$24 billion was spent on state and municipal lotteries nationwide. That one-year total would fund the nation's public libraries at 1992 levels for five years.

For 1992 veteran computer giant IBM reported a \$5 billion loss. That is 10 percent more than the nation's public libraries spent that year.

Are Libraries Losing the Game?

Home video games are a \$5.5 billion a year industry.¹

That's almost four times the \$1.5 billion spent annually on the curricular resources in public and private school libraries.²

That's more than five times the \$1.0 billion spent annually for educational and research materials for college and university libraries.³

That's almost eight times the \$0.7 billion spent annually on the information, literature, and lifelong learning materials available in public libraries.⁴

Or, to total it up, 72 percent more than the \$3.2 billion total for materials for all of these types of libraries.

Sources:

¹Reported in "Database", *US News & World Report*, December 27, 1993/January 3, 1994, p.12.

²Estimated from figures reported in "Expenditures for Resources in School Library Media Centers, FY 1991-92", *School Library Journal*, October 1993, p. 28.

³Reported in *Academic Libraries 1990*, National Center for Education Statistics, 1993.

⁴Estimated from figures reported in *Public Libraries in the U.S. 1991*, National Center for Education Statistics, 1993.

Look around and find your own "snapshots" and use them effectively.



Let's Look at Annual Summaries

Annual summaries are reports developed for library boards, city councils, county commissions, and the general public. They may range from a one-page brochure to an inch-thick document. Unless you are asked for more, the report should be as concise as possible. Remember, you want busy people to read it.

Make the report as attractive as possible. Highlight your major accomplishments, or disasters, if necessary. Even with the disasters, make them as positive as you can.

Example

The January earthquake brought our library to a standstill. However, the library has come back stronger and better. In the general cleanup and rebuilding we removed all the asbestos in the ceiling. New and more efficient lighting was installed. The staff took this opportunity to look closely at the functions of the library and recommended changes in the arrangement of the work areas. Adequate wiring and telephone lines were installed for telecommunications and networking. And, in general, the functions of the library were greatly improved. The library's patrons have been very favorable in their comments on the new arrangement.

On pages 31-32 is an example of a two-page brochure designed to tell the public (and public officials) what happened at the library during the past year. Printed on eye-catching paper and designed to be folded in thirds, this brochure could be mailed to a select group of people, stuffed in with the utility bills, handed out at the local fair, and made available at the library's circulation desk and at local establishments around town.

And don't forget to mail a copy to the State Library Division. They keep such reports on file so that other libraries can look at them for ideas.

Just remember, tell your story in the simplest way possible. Keep it short, make it explicit, make it colorful and eye-catching, and most important, see that it is readable.

**Foot of the Mountain
Public Library**

200 East Valley Road
Foot of the Mountain, UT
84000-0200

801-321-9876
FAX: 801-231-1234

Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.
Noon - 9 p.m.
Fri. - Sat.
Noon - 5 p.m.

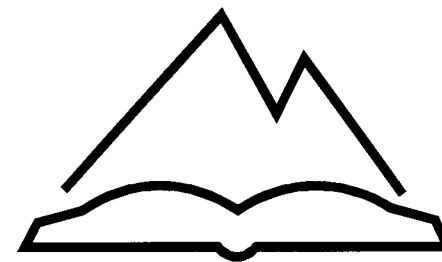
Pre-School Story Hour:

Wed. 10 a.m.

Board of Trustees:

Thelma Thicklemeyer, Chair
Glenn Gulliver, Vice-Chair
Darrell Dodson
Mabel Meiserhoff
Paul Pratt
Wilma Williams
Zada Zamanski

The Library Board meets on the first
Tuesday of each month in the library's
meeting room.



*Foot of the
Mountain
Public Library*

*1993
Report
to the
Townspeople*

February 1993

1993 Summary

Major Programs for the Year

Pre-School Story Hour continued its success of previous years with an average attendance of 22 children per week. The Story Hour is coordinated by our children's librarian, Sally Simms, and several volunteers read the stories and help with crafts.

A **Summer Reading Program** was conducted for the first time this year and was a rousing success. Over 500 children signed up for the program, which had different activities for various age groups. Collectively, the children read over 4,000 books this summer.

The **New Library Building Project** is progressing rapidly. Groundbreaking ceremonies and celebration will be held on April 10. We were awarded a federal LSCA grant which will cover approximately one-third of the cost of the building and furnishings. The city has agreed to fund another third of the project. And the last third is being raised from public donations. About 90% of the donated money has been raised at this time.

Volunteers

The library's volunteer program continues apace. We would like to acknowledge the volunteers (53 in all) who have contributed their time and effort to the library this year. They are too numerous to mention here, but we would urge all library visitors to stop and look at our **Volunteer Board of Thanks** hanging in the lobby of the library. Among the volunteers' activities are serving on the Library Board, helping with story hours and summer reading programs, fund raising, and helping new patrons learn about our library.

How We Compare

In looking at the sixty-nine public library jurisdictions in Utah, Foot of the Mountain Public Library ranks very high in many categories:

Circulation per Capita	2
FOM -	20.5
State Ave. -	8.5
Holdings Turnover	16
FOM -	2.9
State Ave. -	3.0
Holdings per Capita	16
FOM -	7.0
State Ave. -	2.9
Hours Open Per Week	25
FOM -	46.0
State Ave. -	36.7

Circulation Load Per FTE Staff . . .	11
FOM -	35,735
State Ave. -	22,576
Expenditures per Capita	6
FOM -	\$21.51
State Ave. -	\$16.89
Index of Local Financial Effort . . .	1
FOM -	113.1
State Ave. -	45.7

In Conclusion

The library continues to grow. Circulation is up a whopping 20% over last year, with staff and expenditures holding steady. There will be an increase in the book budget in 1994 as we prepare to move to larger facilities. In 1995 we will be in the new building and will have to increase the number of employees to properly staff the new facility. Additional operating costs for the new building (including extra staff) are estimated to be about 50 cents per capita.

All in all, it has been a growing year for the Foot of the Mountain Public Library. We have seen significant increases in the number of people using the library and its programs and materials. We have outgrown our current facility and look forward to growing into our new building.

Let's Tell Your Story In Conclusion

In this era of "sound bites", extra-busy people and short attention spans, you must be able to tell your story and sell your library in a very concise manner. Statistics and the graphic presentation of those statistics can do the job admirably. Learn what is important to your audience and tailor your approach to that theme.

Adapt some of the examples used in this publication. Be alert to statistics in the magazines and newspapers which could be used to show the status of your library, or libraries in general. In the August 1994 issue of *Directions for Public Libraries* was a two-page article on the status of Utah libraries. The portion of the article which was picked up by newspapers throughout the state was the paragraph which said that Utah residents spent \$16.99 on libraries in 1993 and listed what else could be purchased with \$16.99. Visits per capita, holdings, national comparisons were all ignored. Newspapers like a good story with a hook in it.

In summary: Keep good statistics; tell your story using those statistics, give a true picture (don't distort the facts); use graphs to prove your point, and graphics to liven up the snippets of information you are providing.





Appendix A

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Public Library Trustee Handbook, Information Forum Publication #4. June 1993.

Family Literacy, Information Forum Publication #5. June 1993.

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Related Publications

Directions for Utah Libraries (newsletter)

Directory of Academic Libraries in Utah

Directory of Public Libraries in Utah

LSCA Handbook

Utah Public Library Service (Annual Report)